

YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

MY FAVORITE HYMN.

M., Aug. 27. The first Bible song. Exod. 15:1-13.
 T., Aug. 28. Moses' great song. Deut. 33:1-7.
 W., Aug. 29. A Christian hymn. Acts 4:23-31.
 T., Aug. 30. Mary's hymn. Luke 1:46-55.
 F., Aug. 31. Songs in the heart. Eph. 5:17-20.
 S., Sept. 1. Music of heaven. Rev. 5:9-14.
 S., Sept. 2. Topic—My Favorite Hymn. Tell
 Why. Ps. 33:1-22. (A musical
 consecration meeting.)
 What value have hymns in society work?
 What value have evangelistic hymns?
 How can we use hymns more intelligently?

We have sometimes asked a company of young people, about to begin a religious service, what they would like to sing, and the answer has been, "Anything." We fear that is very much the spirit of a good many people in their singing.

Most people recognize singing as a

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part of worship, but there are a great many who do not make worship of it. In public worship the singing is the part in which practically every one can take part.

Singing is one of the ways in which we express our feelings to God. So we ought to be very careful that we feel what we say. There are some people who seem to forget that the words they are using have a meaning. Such people sometimes sing:

"Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold,"

and yet they withhold everything. Some sing lustily:

"Just as I am without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidst me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come,"

and yet they do not come to the Saviour.

When we sing without thinking of what we are saying, we dishonor God, and do discredit to ourselves.

There are some compositions found in hymn books that are not hymns at all. They may be beautiful poems. Some years ago one about "Mother's Hands" was often heard in church, but it had no proper place in the worship of God. There are others of the same kind.

There are a great variety of hymns and they treat of many subjects, but in them all we should never leave out the element of worship.

Some hymns afford the opportunity of adoring God for His wonderful attributes, just as the psalmist sang, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

In others we ought to express our thanksgiving to God for His goodness. In still others we can make confession of our sins as David did in the Fifty-first Psalm. Hymns may be prayers in which we ask God for what we need for ourselves or desire for others. They may be an expression of our confidence in our God, as

"The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want,"

or they may be the outbursting of love, as

"My Jesus, I love thee,
I know thou art mine."

Hymns may be used to present to others the great truths of the gospel or to give the invitation of salvation, as this, for instance,

"Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,
Calling to you and to me."

In giving such an invitation we are worshipping God in proclaiming His salvation.

Let us not forget that in all singing in religious services we ought to worship God. We cannot do this when we sing without thinking of the meaning of the words we are using. The line,

"For Christ count everything but loss,"

is often entirely spoiled by thoughtless singers as they sing,

"For Christ counts every thing but loss."

One reason why there is less worship in singing than there ought to be is that many people think more of the tune than they do of the words. Many hymns are selected and sung be-

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cause the singers like the tune, when no thought is given to the words. A good tune is a great help and inspiration, but it should be only a vehicle for carrying the thought contained in the words.

More emphasis ought to be placed upon the singing than is usually done. It is a great source of inspiration. Where a congregation joins heartily in the singing it is far more apt to receive spiritual blessings than when the singing is left to a few.

In every congregation or society there ought to be some provision made for training in singing. The old-fashioned singing schools accomplished a great deal in their day, and it would be well to have them revived. But just meeting together to sing and learn the hymns with some one who can lead them will be found to be very profitable.

Which is your favorite hymn That question would be answered very differently by different people. Each one ought to have not only one, but a dozen, a score or more.

It would be very helpful to your spiritual life, if you would select some hymn that appeals especially to your soul. Commit the words to memory and sing it over many times to yourself as you go along life's way. When you know this one thoroughly then select another, but do not let the first go. Keep up this practice and you will get much pleasure and profit.

In selecting hymns for a service do not be afraid to select the old ones that have stood the test of many years. If you will notice, you will find that

as a rule the old ones are sung better than the new ones. Sometimes hymn books are thrown aside, because it is said that the hymns are old, and something new is wanted. But when the new book is gotten it is chiefly the old hymns that are sung. There are good new hymns, but many new ones live only a little while, for they do not appeal to the soul like those that have lived through the years, because of the life-giving truth they contain.

Not how much talent have I, but how much will to use the talent that I have, is the main question.—W. C. Gannett.



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